

GOOD CITIZEN SERIES

HOW TO RUN SCHOOL SOCIETIES

A Book for Teachers

by

V. L. GRIFFITHS

and

M. ABBAS

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The Good Citizen Series : No. 2

HOW TO RUN SCHOOL SOCIETIES



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A BOOK FOR TEACHERS

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V. L. GRIFFITHS

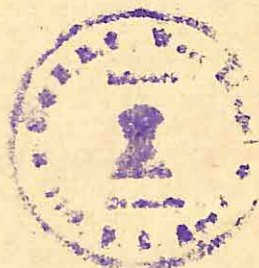
AND

M. ABBAS

WITH A FOREWORD BY

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FOR THE COLONIES



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FOREWORD TO THE SERIES

IN recent years the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, although itself not part of the British Colonial Empire, has, like most of the colonies, been making rapid strides towards self-government. One foundation for this advance has naturally been a healthy growth of its educational system generally. Another has been the educative process of a deepening experience in local self-government, without which the progress now made at the centre would be likely to take much longer to consolidate. For those working in education in the Colonies, whether they are Colonials or from the United Kingdom, unofficial or Government officers, there is one feature of special interest in what has been happening in the Sudan. It is that concurrently with the political advance, and with the growth of self-managing voluntary societies in public life (such as co-operatives, clubs or committees responsible for schools), a deliberate and carefully thought out attempt has been made during the last ten years to develop the educational system in certain ways which have a direct bearing both on the promotion of self-government, and on the capacity of any adult group to run its own affairs successfully.

Such was the interest shown in this by the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies that the Committee included, as the Appendix to its recent report on *Education for Citizenship in Africa* (Colonial No. 216, 1948), a short account by Mr. V. L. Griffiths, Principal of the Institute of Education at Bakht-er-Ruda, of the special work that has been undertaken by the Education Department in the Northern Sudan. Its object is to foster in the schools those particular qualities of character and attitudes of mind on which the effective working of self-

government and the reputation abroad of a self-governing people must ultimately so largely depend. The books to be made more widely available now in *The Good Citizen Series* were initially prepared during this series of experiments in the Sudan.

Central among these experiments has been the development in the schools of self-governing societies and discussions on their problems, technical and human. Mr. Griffiths and his colleagues believe that the best age for the training this provides is in late adolescence, when young people who have acquired a little experience of life are naturally intensely interested in such problems, and yet are young enough to accept advice with readiness. Most schools at the post-primary stage in the Colonies have societies, many of them thriving, even though few perhaps have yet experimented in the kind of School General Society, which, founded on an idea in J. H. Simpson's *Sane Schooling*, has now been generally adopted in schools for adolescents in the Northern Sudan. *The Good Citizen Series* is in large measure designed to help older boys and teachers to make their societies effective training grounds for future citizens who will have, locally or in wider spheres, increasing opportunities for service on self-governing voluntary or official bodies.

The Series is therefore planned to include these books on Societies :—

Societies : In School and Out, a reference book for older boys (and others) on society procedure. An important feature is the discussion of the principles behind procedures. Unless principles are understood, procedures often become restrictive.

How to Run School Societies, a handbook for teachers.

School Accounts, a handbook for school treasurers and accountants.

I hope that to these there may perhaps be added a further

book describing more fully the work actually done in Sudan schools by different types of society, including the School General Society and the Young Farmers' Club.

The interest shown in the Sudan in the analysis of certain qualities of character required by citizens of a healthy self-governing community, whether local or national, will be reflected by these books on character :—

Character Aims, a book for teachers and for boys leaving school, it discusses the standards needed in certain qualities of character if a country is to take an honourable place in the modern world.

Character Training, a book mainly addressed to parents, it explains some of the new features in present-day education and the part that should be played by the home.

Character : Its Psychology, an introductory review, for teachers and educated parents, of the present views of psychologists on character, its formation and common causes of weaknesses.

The very great importance of character training, and its spiritual basis, have long been so generally recognised by those working in good Colonial schools and training colleges that these thoughtful studies will be of particular interest.

A book with exercises on straight thinking is also in preparation.

The work in the Sudan has throughout been undertaken by a mixed team of British and Sudanese, and this is reflected in the authorship of several books in the Series.

From the point of view of the Colonies the series will be appearing at an opportune time. I hope it may prove interesting and relevant, particularly to those working along similar lines in training colleges and post-primary schools.

C. W. M. COX.

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INTRODUCTION

This Teacher's Handbook is designed for use with the book: "*Societies: In School and Out*". The latter is a book of reference dealing with the principles behind society procedure and the qualities of character needed by members if a society is to work successfully. It is primarily addressed to boys aged 14 and upwards. Such boys already have some experience of societies and are now reaching positions of responsibility and need to know more about principles. The book may also be of use to others outside school.

It is hardly necessary in these days to stress the importance to a country of a knowledge of the principles of community collaboration and the importance of the qualities of character necessary for such co-operation.

What is new here is the attempt we are making to give to the young systematic training in these principles. Most people have so far taken the line that one picked up this knowledge and character; that it could not be taught. With this view we are only in agreement so far as we think it true that tradition and custom play a large part in society behaviour. But customs can be changed and tradition developed by active measures. We need not wait 2000 years for the gradual effects of unguided experience. We can hasten the process by education of the right kind.

In this belief, a method of guiding and advising school societies has been worked out during the last two and a half years in the Sudan at the Institute of Education, Bakht er Ruda and at the Dueim Rural Intermediate School. It is hoped that these experiments will be of help and interest to those who are facing similar problems in other countries.

The present book, the Handbook for Teachers, is the result of that experience. It contains a discussion on Aims (Chapters I to III), the method of taking lessons on societies in class (Chapter IV), advice to teachers in charge of school societies (Chapter V) and points by which to estimate the standard of a society—useful to both teacher and inspector (Chapter VI). In order to increase the value of the book for Training Courses, suggestions have been given for exercises to be worked through by the student-teacher. A study of the book alone will not be adequate for the student-teacher. The following should also be included in any course of study:—

1. Observation of boys' society meetings.
2. Teaching practice with senior classes.
3. A club or some other society composed of members of the course for practical experience under supervision.

The third item should be omitted only if the members of the course have had previous society experience *under supervision*.

To the acknowledgements of help given in the introduction to "*Societies : In School and Out*", it is only necessary to add here that the authors profited greatly from the problems and difficulties which emerged during the first course of training given in this activity. This was a course for Intermediate Schoolmasters and it was held at Bakht er Ruda in July and August, 1942.

In spite of this help and the experience gained, the authors would be the first to admit the need for further experience and the testing of these methods by more teachers and in different surroundings. Suggestions and criticisms will be most gratefully received and carefully considered in the preparation of any future edition of this book.

V. L. G.
M. A.

CHAPTER I.

THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF SCHOOL SOCIETIES.

If the teacher, who is attached to a school society, is to use his influence wisely, it is important that he should be clear in his mind as to why such societies are not only permitted but are encouraged as part of education. There are two main reasons.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

First, school societies give an opportunity to those who are interested in or have a gift for some particular subject or activity to continue with it further than they do in class.

The important thing is that school societies allow boys to do different things instead of all doing the same thing (as in class). In the past our schools have tended to concentrate on securing an all-round development of each boy. We have even tried, though never with success, to get each boy to do equally well in each subject.

But while there should be a minimum all-round development, we must recognise differences of interest and ability, just as we notice differences in height and strength, between one boy and another. One boy may have a brain that enables him to do mathematics easily, while at the same time he is very poor at painting. Another is clumsy at any work with his hands—poor writing, bad handwork—but finds it easy to speak fluently at meetings.

The development of each one's particular interests through societies has these advantages. First, the community is enriched by the variety of expert knowledge

and ability developed in its members who concentrate on different activities. Secondly, the individual's character is strengthened by difference of interest in contrast to the sheep-like behaviour encouraged by too much uniform activity.

Every boy has something he could be good at, if he has the opportunity and tries hard. School societies attempt to give this opportunity and it is up to the boy to try hard.

If you, the teacher, are very keen on your particular society, you may be inclined to expect every boy to join, and to think that those who do not must be lazy or good-for-nothing. But this is not so. A boy may not be interested or gifted in the activities of your society. His bent may be for something else in which you, in your turn, are uninterested.

TRAINING IN CO-OPERATION WITH OTHERS.

The second reason why school societies are encouraged is that they give experience in working together. There was a time when people thought that if you wanted to learn anything, whatever it might be, all you had to do was to sit in class and memorise how to do it from what the teacher told you. But for many things that is quite insufficient. One could not learn to swim by studying a book about swimming and never practising in the water. Nor can one learn to co-operate with others or acquire the self-discipline necessary for social life by merely reading this book.

Practice is necessary because there are no simple rules for getting on well with other people. Each man's personality is different from the next. We differ in our likes and dislikes, in our degree of calmness or impetuosity and in our desire to lead or to be led. The older boys will have found this out from their ordinary school life, but the

advantage of school societies is that they are largely self-governing and therefore give boys the opportunity of actually trying to decide their own affairs without relying on masters.

As soon as they start having to solve their own problems they come up against a number of difficulties which we are always meeting in grown-up life. This is especially the case if the society has a limited amount of money to spend, because the amount of money available is what controls so many of our activities. They meet the difficulty of agreeing how best to spend their money, of dealing with members who have got slack, of choosing the most suitable leaders and so on. They need to learn when to use tact and when to be firm with a difficult member. They have to train themselves to think calmly when people are arguing hotly and to put the general welfare first in their thoughts: and sometimes it may happen that a boy has to exercise considerable courage in stating a view or taking action which is unpopular with the majority of his friends, but which he believes to be right.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-DISCIPLINE ESSENTIAL.

All these things are difficult because although we think our minds work calmly and logically, in fact they don't. Our minds are constantly being affected by inborn feelings which want things to happen so that *we ourselves* shall be satisfied rather than other people benefit. These feelings sometimes warp our minds without our knowing it and make us argue unsoundly.

A person easily notices this in other people. You listen to so and so arguing strongly and illogically against a change in a rule and at once you think "I know why he is doing this; he does not like to give way when once he has started an argument." Or perhaps you think the

reason is that he dislikes the person who first suggested the change. And you think "How selfish so and so is." Perhaps so and so is deliberately selfish : but more likely he has not examined his own motives and does not realise why he is arguing unsoundly. He thinks he is being logical and public spirited.

We, of course, notice all this : but what we do not notice is that we ourselves are often moved by similar unconscious motives.

School societies give boys an opportunity to make a start at studying their own motives and the way other people's minds work and to begin training themselves in the control of their feelings—all difficult matters which take many, many years, but which are essential to a useful and happy social life when they grow up.

TRAINING FOR CITIZENSHIP.

One may go further and say that the wisdom which comes from experience coupled with the will to serve one's fellow men must be the possession of at least a fair proportion of the citizens of a modern state, otherwise bribery, self-seeking favouritism and political intrigue become rampant—though often covered by a screen of high sounding words about patriotism and serving one's country.

School societies can be one of the most valuable means of training in good citizenship and the responsibility of the teacher for wise guidance in this matter is a very important one.

Assignment (for Student Teachers) : The above note explains the educational aims of societies. To what extent are the "appeal aims" (i.e. the aims which appeal to the boys) different? How far do you think the older boys can appreciate the educational aims? Discuss these two questions.

CHAPTER II.

TYPES OF SCHOOL SOCIETIES.

We have suggested in the previous section two important educational benefits to be derived from societies in schools—the development of (*a*) individual interests and (*b*) the character and experience necessary to be a good citizen. But societies vary in the extent to which they give such training. As a help to getting this important criterion for judging the relative usefulness of a society clear in one's mind, we give below a classified list of some societies of which we have personal experience.

It is not suggested that all these societies or only these societies will be suitable for your school. Schools will be more alive if they develop an individuality of their own—suited to their societies to the particular opportunities of their environment and to the interests of their boys and staff. This list must therefore be looked upon as a sample, intended to stimulate the teacher and to assist the headmaster in keeping a wise balance on this side of education.

I. Societies characterised by large membership ; varied activities ; considerable responsibility, including control of money.

- (*a*) *Young Farmers' Club*. An actual example was : voluntary, but with the attraction of pocket money of from 12s. to £3 a year. Individual or group holdings but rent, irrigation, buying and selling done through club. Seventy-five tenants' accounts and annual budget balances around £200. Constitution requires certain standards of cultivation and self work to be observed.
- (*b*) *School General Society*. Compulsory, but self-governing. Responsible for certain sides of school

life—games, health precautions, repairs to furniture, gardens, library, school bank, etc.—similar in principle to central government's delegation to local authority. Financed by tax on "pocket money" paid by school to boys (minimum tax fixed). Headmaster's control through annual budget approval and formal inspection and fines. Besides groups responsible for expenditure, a great deal of actual chores done by boys daily.

II. Societies satisfying a special interest ; usually small membership ; little or no money ; some responsible jobs but often, because learning, more like a class.

- (a) *Art/Handwork Society*. Approximates to voluntary art class, but some opportunities for decision and arrangement in art show, and camps.
- (b) *Music Society*. Also practically a voluntary class.
- (c) *Natural History Society*. Keeping hens, pigeons, ducks, geese, rabbits, etc. : or a small zoo. Small subscriptions and small sales. Occasional lectures. Most decisions taken in general meeting.
- (d) *Wall Magazine*. Articles, drawings and news written out and posted weekly in frames on wall. Editorial Committee.
- (e) *Literary Society*. Meets for reading of plays, lectures, etc. Programmes to be decided and arranged.

III. Societies—large and irresponsible.

Debating Society. Attended by all—no money to control and no responsibility for decisions but rouses interest in general problems.

The above list includes only a few of the many societies a school can run. Others which occur to one are : Boy Scout Troops which, though small in numbers, supply varied activities and many opportunities for responsibility ; Dramatic Society ; A Young Traders' Society (running a school shop) ; various games' societies if not already included under the School General Society.

Finally, it should be realised that valuable parts of the training obtained through societies can also be given in certain other school activities particularly in :—

Projects—where the work undertaken needs to be organised for groups, and discussions and decisions are constantly required.

Sports' Day or Parents' Day—where the organisation is handed over to a class or other group of boys.

Boarding House Life and School Camps—where small groups may frequently be working together and responsible for particular duties.

In all these activities, the same principles for discussion and decision and the same qualities of self discipline, co-operation and leadership should be inculcated.

Assignments (for Student Teachers). 1. Describe in what way the general meetings of a Young Farmers' Club or a School General Society are better than a Debating Society, as a training in the qualities desired in a citizen.

2. Make a list of societies which you know and which are not included in the classified list : classify them under the same headings.

CHAPTER III.

THE USE OF THE TEXT-BOOK : " SOCIETIES : IN SCHOOL AND OUT ".

Having got some idea of the educational aims of school societies and of the types of societies it is possible to have in school, the next thing is to get a thorough acquaintance with the text-book " Societies : In School and Out ", and to understand why it has been written in the form it has. This we shall do in this chapter.

The book has two uses—one for reference by boys individually, the other for study in the classroom. How to use it in the classroom is explained in the next chapter. Its use for individual reference is explained in the introduction to the book itself.

Assignments (for Student Teachers). 1. Read the Introduction to the book " Societies : In School and Out " and write down the reason why the book is not just a list of rules of procedure. What does the book attempt to cover ?

2. Read through a sample chapter such as Chapter III in Part I on how discussions are carried on. Give two examples from the chapter of a choice of procedures being suggested and two places where reference to character or behaviour is made.

Other Points Stressed. In preparing a book such as this on societies for practical use, one must not only emphasise points of universal importance such as the need for understanding principles and the essential qualities of character, but one must also discover what particular errors are likely to arise or have arisen in one's own country either owing to tradition or a mistaken

reaction from tradition ; and then the right principles in those matters must be stressed.

In the text-book we have placed some emphasis on committees and on the duties of the ordinary member. To understand why, you cannot do better than read this note that we have written to those about to leave school. It is reprinted from the text-book :—

APPENDIX C.

“ TO THOSE LEAVING SCHOOL.”

Now that you are about to leave school, you may be looking forward to making use in adult life of the knowledge you have gained of how to run societies and the training you have had in the qualities of character necessary for such co-operation. You may be joining a club and perhaps have some opportunity of doing social service with others in a group. In years to come you may be serving on committees and perhaps one day on some local government council or sub-committee of it.

How will this training you have had help you ? It will help you a good deal, I hope, provided you keep certain facts in your mind.

1. Don't think that what you have learnt is all new. For instance, your father and grandfather have used, in solving their community problems, two important principles which are the same as we have been following in our societies.

- (i) *Solution by discussion.* For instance, when some serious dispute arises between two persons in the village it is often solved by a number of persons coming together and discussing the matter until an agreement is reached. Not only are disputes dealt with in this way, but so are matters of general benefit to the community, such as the digging of a well or the upkeep of a religious school (in times past). Democracy has been called “ government by discussion rather than by majority ”, meaning that

the most important thing is to get all sides of a problem aired so that a good solution can be arrived at. The majority vote is not so important as is this previous discussion. This airing of facts and views is already part of the traditions of many countries.

- (ii) *The use of the committee.* These solutions are arrived at usually by a small group of three to ten or so of the leading men of the village. It is true that they are not elected : they are usually called together by some prominent person. But use of the small group to get things done is, as you have seen, an essential method of the form of government that we have been learning. We neither leave everything to one man nor, on the other hand, to the general meeting of everybody. A great deal of the work in societies is done by committee ; many countries have this tradition.

2. What, then, is there that is new in School Societies ?

The new developments are two :—

- (i) *Increase in the efficiency of discussion.* Modern life is more complicated than the old and there is more to do ; therefore less time can be given to talking about each point. For these reasons the solution-by-discussion method has to be made more efficient. For instance all must not talk at once, but one by one, briefly and to the point. Suggestions are proposed in a formal way in order to make quite certain what is suggested and voted on.

If you have understood this book properly you will have realised that there is no single fixed set of rules of procedure for all the world : but that each society or committee uses rules to suit itself. You will find clubs and societies outside school which have customs and procedures different from those you are used to. But if they achieve the right result—i.e. fairness and efficiency, then they are good rules. At any rate, even if at first you think they are not very good, it is better to keep your opinions to yourself, rather than as a new-comer to show off your

knowledge—and perhaps incidentally your ignorance of human nature—by scornful criticisms. Such criticisms will only antagonise older members. Wait until you are older and more experienced and you can then bring in reform. Meanwhile co-operate and set a good example in member's behaviour.

- (ii) *Increase in persons taking part.* The other development that is taking place is in the number of persons taking part in discussions and decisions. It is true that when a group of leading men in the village are discussing and deciding something, many others come and listen and occasionally even join in with a remark : but in the developments that are taking place now, far more people are taking part and young people are joining in as well as old.

Some young people, enjoying these advantages for the first time, get carried away with the idea of freedom and think that democracy means each person doing as he likes. Your own experience of societies in school will have shown how discipline is still necessary if a society or a country is to be strong. You can do good in this matter by setting a good example.

A Warning. There is a danger that in using modern procedures, and especially the vote, the old spirit of compromise and toleration may be lost. In a village, two people in a dispute may each take an extreme view : but before a decision is reached each is taken aside by friends and persuaded to modify his view. In a modern society a vote is sometimes taken so quickly that there is no time for modification of views : and once a vote is taken it is difficult to go back on it.

Hence you will find that an experienced democracy will usually give thought to modifications before any vote is taken. An example of this is a law about health insurance recently passed by the British Labour Government. In spite of their big majority the Labour Party considerably modified their proposals to suit opposition opinion and thus encourage their opponents to co-operate in carrying out the new law. You can call this modification a *semi-agreement*—because the

opposition were still not in favour of the proposed law, but they were now more ready to carry it out.

Keep it in mind : it is essential to good government.

Finally, keep in mind that while democratic societies give much freedom to the individual, *that* freedom is only possible if each individual also contributes some service to the community.

You will have new opportunities of service when you have left school. Be ready to take those opportunities. Do not look for position and honour to begin with. If you held important offices in your school societies, you will find it difficult at first to be a loyal *ordinary* member. You may find yourself losing interest because you are no longer leading, or being over-critical and irresponsible in your remarks because you no longer have a main say in policy. Watch yourself in this. Discipline yourself. Your time will come again to lead—provided you show yourself capable in small things.

The first thing to do is to **serve** : and to **serve** in any capacity, however humble.

Assignments (to Student Teachers). 1. Write down why you think we have stressed the importance of committees and the duties of members. To answer this question draw on what you have read above and on your own intelligence.

2. In order to get the subject matter of this chapter clear in your mind write down, in the form of a list, the two general principles and the two special points we have tried to emphasise in the text-book.

CHAPTER IV.

CLASS METHOD.

Aims and the methods of achieving them. There are two things for a boy to learn : society procedure and the qualities of character needed for successful co-operation. These are mainly learnt by becoming a member of societies with good traditions and by experiencing, because of the mistakes and selfishness which from time to time spoil the success of all societies, the need for tolerance, discipline, restraint, self-sacrifice, etc.

But this learning by experience is lengthy and not always effective, unless there is a wise and experienced person to lead the boy to see where and how improvement can be made. This is the function of the teacher. When and how should the teacher give his advice ?

Our suggestion is that it is better to avoid giving advice during meetings—except on the subject matter of the meeting and then usually only if asked. If the teacher frequently speaks at meetings, the boys, instead of thinking for themselves, come to rely on him to get them out of any difficulty. Also his position as a teacher tends to be called on to preserve discipline and quell unruly members.

There is not the same objection to class discussion. Here the teacher and the boys have time to study what should have been done at the meeting, to go back to first principles and thus to reap the profits of experience and reflection.

We propose in this chapter to give some suggestions on the method of conducting such classes.

Two principles. There are two main principles to keep in mind all through one's teaching of this subject in class. They are :—

1. *Only tackle problems after they have arisen either in the societies or in the boys' minds.* This is essential to any vitality in these lessons. The boys won't be interested in problems they have not experienced or that they do not see looming immediately ahead of them. This means, of course, that the book is *not* to be studied through in sequence from page 1 to the end. The boys should read what it has to say about the particular problem they are studying.

2. *Treat a minor problem as part of the bigger whole to which it belongs.* For instance, the question of minute-keeping is part of the general question of ensuring that correct action is taken on decisions, and it should not be studied alone. The boys should read the whole section so as to get at the basic reason for recording minutes, and to get minutes in proper proportion to other measures. This constant getting down to the fundamental reasons for society procedure is very important, because only by appreciating those reasons will boys adopt sensible procedures—suited to big or small societies and to general or committee meetings as the occasion demands.

A suggested lesson plan. The following is the plan of a typical classroom lesson of two periods in length—each of 40 minutes. They need not be on the same day.

Period I.

- About 20 minutes.
- A. (i) First a few minutes for *each boy to write down in his notebook his own points* of query or criticism on a recent society meeting. (The keen ones may well have written some of their points at the meeting or soon after. But this few minutes in the lesson is for the lazier boys.)
- (ii) Then the teacher questions boys on the things they noticed, writing up *the points on*

the blackboard. They can be classified into Queries and Criticisms.

- (iii) Then, looking at the blackboard and with the boys' co-operation, the teacher sees which criticisms and queries are connected and which at the same time bring up some important general principle—e.g. there may be a number of criticisms of the chairman's action in discussion. This might bring up the general question of the qualities needed in a chairman, the treatment of minorities or the behaviour of members. According to the interest of the boys and the importance of the point, the teacher *chooses a group of boys' criticisms or queries which bring up such a general principle.* These are the subjects for to-day's lesson.

Note. Any attempt to reach a conclusion about the criticisms at this stage of the lesson should be avoided. It is better to confine oneself to collecting individual boys' views of what was wrong. Argument will come *after* reading about the general principles in the book.

About
20
minutes.

B. *Boys turn to the chapter in the book which discusses the main problem raised—e.g. behaviour of members. They read this silently. The book has been divided into "reading sections", which are numbered in the margin. These divisions are based on length rather than subject matter, because it has been found that most boys cannot grasp more than a certain amount at one time. After reading a "reading section" each boy will either answer in his notebook the questions given in the book or questions set*

by the teacher : or, if the section is not suitable for serious questioning, there may be a few oral questions from the teacher directed at the weaker boys. (The reading should usually be silent as this is good practice for speed at getting information from a book.) It will probably be necessary to read more than one "reading section" to cover the general problem which has been raised.

Note. Boys who finish the reading much before the others should be given supplementary questions to answer or should look up the references given to other parts of the book.

Period II.

C. *Discussion* now can take place with the main object of seeing how the principles given in the book apply to the problems of the particular meetings and societies of the school.
Important :—

About
30
minutes.

- (i) Query the need for a procedure being applied to a particular society or committee. It may not be necessary. This querying makes the boys think of first principles.
- (ii) *Get the boys to think of relevant examples* taken from other society meetings they have attended. This ensures variety of application of the general principles.
- (iii) Don't be dogmatic yourself over what should be done in particular cases. If you do, give your opinion, give it *after* getting them to give theirs.

About
10
minutes.

D. *Notebooks* are opened and boys copy in points worth remembering—e.g. the five main duties of a chairman at a meeting or the five steps of procedure in discussion. They

should be asked for suggestions as to what they think worth writing in : and the writing should be in note form.

This procedure may be varied and, in the case of a small problem, might be compressed into one instead of two periods : but certain general features should be adhered to :—

1. The *writing* in notebooks, because this helps to prevent the lessons leaving a merely woolly impression in the boys' minds.
2. The *questioning* on what is read, otherwise certain boys tend to read scappily.

The boys in the class who are office-bearers in school societies are naturally the keenest in discussion and the teacher will have to guard against such boys monopolising the discussion. The written work, of course, helps to ensure that all have something to do at least for part of the lesson.

Notebooks. It is suggested that boys' notebooks should contain the following three sections :—

1. From one end—their own queries after a meeting.
2. From the other end—notes of things worth remembering.
3. From the middle—answers to questions.

Books should be collected and checked from time to time.

Examinations. It is quite possible to examine a class in knowledge of this subject by setting them problems in procedure and asking them to say what they think should be done. But the important thing is whether the boy has the energy and self control to do these things in practice. A boy may well make an excellent impression on paper in an examination while in real life he is a thorough nuisance in a society, unreliable and constantly moved by jealousy.

We are not therefore making any suggestions for the written examination of this subject. The place for any estimate of the boy's *ability* is in his character report and there it should certainly be taken into consideration.

The end of the course. You will not cover every point in the text-book during the course. Some points may not arise in the meetings and, further, the number of points is more than one can discuss in the time available.

Towards the end of the time it is a good idea to remind the class that they are nearing the end of their course and to ask them what chapter, from those so far omitted, they would like to study. It is specially desirable to do this if you find that interest is at all flagging owing to so many of the day-to-day points being concerned with procedure and office-bearers' responsibilities.

Lastly, do not forget to give a final period to Appendix C of the text-book, "To Those Leaving School", in which important advice is given to them on their behaviour when they join adult societies.

Assignments (for Student Teachers). 1. After a meeting the following criticisms and queries were raised by boys in class :—

- (a) There were many boys who wanted to speak but the chairman gave the chance of speaking only to a few special boys.
- (b) I have recently resigned my office in the Y.F.C. executive committee. Is there any objection to my telling the members the secrets of that committee?
- (c) I think the practice of reading the minutes of the previous meeting should stop so as to allow more time for discussions.
- (d) It is going to take us an awfully long time to decide whether we should buy the cows or not, why don't we leave it to the president to decide?

(e) I noticed that, in the minutes, the secretary made comments on what the members had said. I think he should write the minutes without making any comments.

(f) I noticed that the chairman was inclined to answer questions. I believe it is better that he should refer the questions to the committee members concerned.

Write down notes for the rest of the lesson, showing what topic you might choose, what part of the book would be read by the boys, any extra questions you would ask, any special points you would emphasise in discussion and what actual notes you would suggest that the boys write in their notebooks.

2. If you wanted to give a revision lesson, how would you plan it? Show the type of work and the points of method you would keep in mind.

CHAPTER V.

HINTS TO THE TEACHER ADVISING A SOCIETY.

1. Giving Advice on Procedure and Action. As a general rule do not interfere in an actual meeting, unless your advice is asked. When it is asked, or when you may feel it necessary to give advice to the chairman or other office-bearer *after* the meeting, try to get your point across by **questioning** rather than by direct advice.

For example, to a boy who wants to know how as chairman he should deal with a very difficult member, it is better to start by saying "What alternative step have you in mind?" and then gradually by questions to get him to think of the further results of those steps and so finally come to a choice. This is better than giving him your opinion straight away. By this method it may often be unnecessary for you to give an opinion: and thus you can avoid the danger of boys coming to rely on your advice rather than on their own judgment.

2. Giving Advice on Behaviour and Character. The kinds of cases you may get occurring in your society are: the chairman spoiling his work by being too quick-tempered; a boy, who has worked hard as acting-secretary, refusing to vote at the election for a new secretary because he has not been included in the nominations; a member constantly spoiling serious discussions by speaking to get a laugh; a senior boy, who has been rather overlooked, getting intensely jealous of others and therefore being constantly obstructive in meetings; and, of course, actual disciplinary cases of boys breaking rules of the society. What can the teacher do?

The teacher can do most valuable work if he has real understanding of his boys and has their sympathy. The help he can give is best done through friendly informal chats with the boy concerned, aimed at helping him to see his own motives and what is the right thing to do. Such informal chats need skill and thought, but the teacher who is interested in his work and in his boys and studies them, can hope to improve his technique steadily.

One of the chief difficulties is to know how much to interfere in this way. Too frequent interference will have its effect on the spontaneity of the boys' response. They will always be thinking you are going to comment on their behaviour. On the other hand to avoid all comment is equally bad. The teacher's duty is to advise and guide, and if he remains completely silent on these matters the boys may get the impression that there are no standards of conduct to be followed. To leave them to learn by experience alone is a slow and uncertain method.

If you are the class teacher of this subject, sometimes incidents of conduct can be usefully discussed in class as well as privately : or if you are not the class teacher, you may be doing a good turn to the class teacher by passing on to him information about such incidents as can suitably be dealt with in class.

3. Visitors and Teachers speaking at Meetings.
Our own experience has been that the presence of teachers (and visitors—provided they are not too many) at the back of a general meeting is not a bad thing. But for teachers or visitors to speak more than very rarely soon develops an atmosphere in which boys in any small difficulty turn to the teacher. By speaking rarely we mean that in most meetings no teacher will speak at all and that never will there be more than one or perhaps two remarks made by teachers and then only *after* the boys have expressed their opinions and usually after being requested

to speak by the chairman. Similarly there should be no applause or laughter from teachers who are watching, because either distracts the attention of the boys and may encourage speakers to show off.

4. Confidential Committee Discussions on Character. There is no need to stress the value of societies in both training and revealing character. But there is a further value especially for the teacher who is attached as adviser to a society. In committee meetings at which he may be present, boys will often need to discuss the suitability of other boys for particular jobs and many frank and revealing remarks on character will be made. It is important that, while such knowledge may be rightly used by the teacher in helping him to improve his efforts in character training, he should avoid giving the impression of being a staff spy! He should be specially careful not to pass on such remarks to boys who are not on the committee. Any spreading of remarks like these can cause dissensions and bad feeling out of all proportion to their origin. This habit of spreading remarks is one of the curses of community life. It can only be overcome by tact, restraint and the development of more toughness of spirit.

5. Preparing Boys for when they leave School. It sometimes happens that a boy, who has done well in societies in school and has reached positions of responsibility, disappoints us after he leaves school. We naturally expect him to show public spiritedness and reliability in the club or society he may join: but instead of that he gives himself up to irresponsible criticism and is the last person to volunteer help. This is usually because in his last year at school he was an important person and now he has once more to take his place in society as a junior and insignificant member.

Can anything be done about this? Yes. The teacher

can prepare the boy's mind during his last year at school by referring to conditions he will meet after he leaves school.

Secondly, he can watch the behaviour of boys who are office-bearers in one society and at the same time ordinary members in another : and if he finds instances of unhelpful behaviour by them in their position as ordinary members, he may be able to find some suitable opportunity to speak about the ideal of being ready to serve in however humble a capacity.

Thirdly, in some schools it may be convenient that the chairmanship and other important offices of certain societies, which require much work from their officers, should not be held by boys in their last year, because such boys have got examinations ahead of them or are concentrating, as in a Training School, on preparing lessons. In such cases the boys in their final year should be encouraged to continue their membership, but as *ordinary loyal* members of the society.

Assignments (for Student Teachers). 1. Imagine that you have noticed at a meeting of a society to which you are adviser that the recent acting-secretary is not taking any part in the voting for a new secretary. You also know that (a) he has not been proposed by anyone, (b) he worked very hard when acting-secretary, (c) he is an earnest type of boy but owing to his being rather introspective is not particularly popular. You can probably call to mind a boy of your acquaintance with these characteristics.

Write down (i) the page reference in the text-book where the principles involved above are discussed.

(ii) What you might say to him should a suitable opportunity present itself to you.

2. You are about to take an enthusiastic visitor to his first meeting of a school society. Write down the exact words you might use in warning him about his behaviour at the meeting.

CHAPTER VI.

POINTS FOR CHECKING PROGRESS.

The following points may be of help to the teacher in trying to estimate the good and weak points of the societies with which he is concerned. They may also be useful to a headmaster or to a visiting inspector for the same purpose, though any conclusions from a brief inspection must necessarily be tentative.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS TO KEEP IN MIND.

Remember :—

- (a) *You are more likely to get incidents*—disputes, quarrels, failures in co-operation, etc.—where boys are keen and the society has money and varied responsibilities than you are in a society where there is little interest and the activities are of a simple nature. The important point is whether the boys are *learning* from those incidents. If they are, then the incidents are valuable. If incidents do not occur in your societies, there is probably something wrong with them.
- (b) *Each generation of boys has to learn.* The members of your societies are continually passing out and new ones coming in. The new ones can pick up a good deal from the tradition they come into, but each batch will inevitably make mistakes. You will never reach anything like perfection in school.

So don't let little troubles and failures loom too large and make you feel that you are failing. Character training is one of the aims, or perhaps the chief aim, of societies :

and character can only be formed by meeting difficulties and overcoming them, by learning from mistakes.

With the above in mind here are a selection of check points under four headings—Meetings, Books, Activities and Classroom Lessons. The number of points has been kept low and only some of the most important given :—

1. MEETINGS.

A preliminary requirement is that the meeting should be *alive and interested*. If that is so, then look for the following points :—

1. *Discipline* :—

do they obey the bell ?

no unessential " points of order " ?

2. *Self reliance* :—

no turning round to see how staff are taking it ?

staff rarely interfere ?

3. *Straight thinking* :—

tendency to pause before speaking ?

rarely exaggerate in argument ?

keep well to the point in discussion ?

4. *Chairman's impartiality* :—

mostly gets other committee members to answer ?

well distributed speakers ?

5. *Procedure* :—

Notice, if suitable occasion arises, whether

reference is made to *ad hoc* committee,

a small opposition is allowed reasonable freedom,

a majority vote is accepted by a small opposition,

opportunity is taken to give information to

members.

2. BOOKS.

Check the following :—

1. *Minutes* :—

(committee and general meeting)—up-to-date ?
Adequate ? Care ?

2. *Action notes* :—

(of any system) exist ?

3. *Finance* :—

Budget—exists ?

Accounts—up-to-date ? audited ?

4. *Other records* :—

e.g. Court cases—if there is a court
Constitution.

Records of special subjects.

Correspondence file.

3. ACTIVITIES.

Look at the society at work :—

1. *Energy* :—

punctual ?

way of walking to job ?

shirts off for physical activity ?

2. *Efficiency* :—

check action notes with actual state of affairs ; have
they been carried out ?

equipment in good state of repair ?

3. *Interest* :—

general impression ?

do boys on jobs know what they are doing and why ?

are there signs of enterprise, new developments ?

4. CLASSROOM.

A. *During lesson* :—

1. Teacher not laying down law but going for *principles* ?
2. Is *lesson planned* to include reading, discussion and writing ? The sample plan gives :—
Period I. 20 minutes collecting suggestions.
20 minutes reading of text-book.
Period II. 30 minutes discussion.
10 minutes writing in notebooks.
3. Does teacher *spread discussion* to include as many boys as possible ?
4. Does he ask *boys to tell him of other instances* in addition to those they have read in the book or mentioned at the beginning—i.e. from their own experience ?

B. *Boys' books and questioning of boys.*

1. Are boys' books kept well ? Should contain :—
 - (i) Boys' own comments.
 - (ii) Answers to questions.
 - (iii) Notes on important points.
2. In questioning boys do you find they have a grasp of *principles* (or do they only know detailed procedures) ?

If you find that the state of your society is generally unsatisfactory, turn to the **Trouble Chart** on the last page of the text-book. There you will find listed :—

Three common causes of inefficiency.

Three common causes of disunion.

Three common causes of lack of interest.

Assignment (for Student Teachers). Get permission to do an inspection of a society at your practice school, and use the above scheme. Do not apply it unthinkingly. Add comments at the end on other points which you thought important.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

- Sane Schooling—H. J. Simpson (Faber). Chapter II describes a School General Society in action.
- The Project Method—A. E. Harper (Lahore)—very valuable in explaining the character-training side of Projects with numerous examples. Projects, of course, have many of the characteristics of society work.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica :—
- Parliamentary Law—for general procedure in discussion in the British Parliament.
- Speaker—for powers and duties of the chairman in the British House of Commons.
- Proportional Representation—for minorities and systems of election (General).
- The Government of England—Lowell (Macmillan)—A standard American text-book describing both central and local government in England. The index can be usefully referred to for many details.
- Parliament—Home University Library—has a Chapter (V) on "Sitting and Procedure".
- Social Relationships in the Near East—Dodd (Beirut)—Chapter 17 for Parliamentary Procedure in brief.
- On Courses, reference can also be made to "Horsham U.D.C. Regulations" which gives the rules controlling business in an English Town Council.
- Democracy in International Affairs—E. H. Carr (University College, Nottingham), 1945. 19 pages. A discussion of what the British mean and what the Russians mean by "democracy".
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This is the end of the method book. In studying these last chapters you have been much concerned with the details of society running. It is a good

thing before you close this book to remind yourself of the main aims once more.

So re-read the first three chapters—especially Chapter I. Your study of details will now make those chapters much clearer to you.

And now we wish you the best of success in putting these aims and ideals into practice !

TROUBLE CHART.

When small mistakes are made—such as forgetting to write up the minutes of a meeting—they are usually obvious : but sometimes a society gets into a generally unsatisfactory condition. You know that it is not going along smoothly and efficiently but it is difficult to put one's finger on any one thing as being wrong. Here is a check chart of what our experience has shown are the most common sources of trouble. The references are to the text-book "*Societies: In School and Out*".

THREE COMMON CAUSES OF INEFFICIENCY.

1. The general meeting deals with more than the four points—and therefore wastes much time. (Re-read Part I, Chapter II, pages 24-5.)
2. Steps taken to keep members properly informed are inadequate—and therefore they do not co-operate properly. (Re-read Part I, Chapter IV, pages 31-3 and 51.)
3. The Secretary does not take proper steps to see that action on decisions is taken. (Re-read Part I, Chapter VII, pages 50-1.)

THREE COMMON CAUSES OF DISUNION.

1. Tale-telling after committee meeting. (See Appendix B, pages 120-1.)
2. Treating minorities improperly. (See Part II, Chapter I, pages 87-8.)
3. Too much arguing back by chairman. (See Part I, Chapter III, pages 28-9.)

THREE COMMON CAUSES OF LACK OF INTEREST.

1. Inefficiency is discouraging members. (See above.)
2. Activities have become stale and a change is needed.
3. Too much dependence is being placed by the society's officers on the teacher's ideas and members no longer feel responsible.





LONGMANS